

22 September 1958

JUSTIFICATION FOR LIFTING BAN ON CHICOM COAST COVERAGE

1. Intelligence should be able to but cannot now answer the following fundamental question:

Do the CHICOMs have the capability and operational readiness for an early assault on the offshore islands including most importantly a deployment of support forces sufficient in depth to achieve their objective? Coverage showing the magnitude and readiness of the CHICOM forces should permit appraisal of whether their preparation presumes involvement with US forces.

2. As late as July 1958 CHINAT photography showed a normal level of activity in military garrisons in the CANTON/SWATOW area. Mission 6017 of 20 August indicated an absence of equipment and activity in the same garrisons. The presumption is that the two armies (92,000 men) have moved into the FUKIEN military district. There has been no confirmation of this from any source, but their presence in FUKIEN would clearly provide the manpower element essential for assault on QUEMOY and/or the MATSUS.

50X1

Views of Military Commanders

1. General Taylor stated to General Schow on Saturday that now of all times we should continue with the program in the face of the CHICOM show of force during the Ambassadorial talks. It is very important to know the extent of support which lies behind the artillery attack.

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5. On Saturday Admiral Burke talked with the Secretary of State and is reported to have informed him (according to an ONI Special Watch officer) that the Navy was prepared to fulfill its obligation as hitherto outlined.

6. CINCPAC and CINCPACFLT have come in to ONI during the last week asking for coverage to get a reading on the BEAGLES (IL-28s) including the airfields at NANKING, NANCHANG, and SHANGHAI.

7. PACAF (Kuter) has come in asking for coverage of support airfields.